Reckless oaths we swore to keep

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Reckless oaths we swore to keep

by EasyStrain

Summary

What if Hannibal is arrested with evidence before Will could reach out to him for that call in season 2 finale Mizumono, no arrest warrants against Jack/Will, Abigail is found alive and well. Will is flooded with emotions and is ready to do anything to realize his dream of a family for the three of them, but is it going to be easy ? Will faces a love-hurt, devastated and resentful Hannibal in prison. Jack for a change is a cunning and suspects foul play, Bedelia offers help and advise to whoever is ready to take it. How is Will going to shake up stubborn Hannibal and make him trust him again ? A long, dark and difficult journey ensues.

This is my first fanfiction ever, and I only have a vague plan, making this up as I go along. I'm 100% open to advise so please feel free to give me some!

Chapter 1

5 hours

4 hours

3..

2..

2 hours away from what could be the event that would change his life. Will is staring at a black hole, waiting at the event horizon, readying himself to be swallowed whole. He is hurtling towards the darkest dark, once inside, he would not be able to escape, even light cannot escape. “Point of no return…” he mumbles to himself. What would happen? What is ideal? “Is it ideal if Jack dies” a voice echoes, Will traces the voice and finds the source – Hannibal sitting in his desk the familiar fond look in his face.

“What are you thinking Will? I can help you decide if you let me, may I?”

“Oh N..n.no… You don’t know anything; you don’t know me."

“I know you more than you know yourself, please Will let me help you.”

“Don’t say that” Will heard himself saying it out aloud.

Will could feel his eyes are stinging, a sensation of tears but his eyes are dry he blinks to get rid of the discomfort, and Hannibal vanishes, his chair his desk vanishes. Will is where he was since afternoon – his own bed, slumped, there is no energy left in him to pull himself up. Two hours left before he would be at Hannibal’s doors along with Jack, Jack is arranging for a team, and snipers, and they would be wearing wires, he would have to get to his car when Jack call, which is anytime now.

“Son of a bitch” Will throws the phone away, Winston is startled and comes up sniffing and wagging, making a low noise.

“Son of a bitch this man is, Winston” Will lightly pets Winston. Son of a bitch indeed Hannibal is he thinks, if only he spared Abigail there would have been no decision to be made, no dinner, no Jack, no deception. He tries to form some focused emotion but his emotions are blurred and kneaded into a lump. He is unable to hate him; he will not be able to kill him he saw that in the farm. He couldn’t watch him die either. Hannibal, son of a bitch, saw to it that Will is driven to a state where he was unable to live without him but would he be ever be able to live with him? With the unspoken knowledge of Abigail’s death hanging in the air, how could he share anything with him.

Will remembers the moment when Hannibal threw a proposal at him, of leaving with him. “We can leave tonight, pack your bag, feed your dogs, leave a note for Alana, almost polite” But more frightening than his proposal was the fact that Will had considered it. Why? What

would be leaving with Hannibal mean anyway? What are they? Friends? Family? Enemy? Something more? Something else? Or everything put together?

Will's train of thought is lost when the phone lit up, Jack… he thought. This is it then. Has he decided anything? No.

Does he know what he can't afford to lose? Yes, probably.

He sits up in the bed, shushes Winston then reaches out for the phone. It's not Jack, a number from the Bureau, Jack was not supposed to be at the Bureau now. After a moment of hesitation, he receives the call.

"Hello?"

A mild sob, a woman's, her breath hitching.

"Hello?"

"Will, they got him"

"Alana?"

He could hear his heart pumping against the rib cage.
"Who got whom Alana?"

"They got him Will, I was so blind, I was so blind. You were always right."

"No."

"I know it is too good to believe."

"No" he doesn't know what he is saying anymore, he realized he should stop talking right now.

"Abigail…"

Will has lost the last bit of ability to converse coherently. He knew what Alana would say. He should have known all along.

"oh N-n-nno… "

"They found her, she is safe now that is why I called. Listen we should not be talking over the phone, come up right now."

Will disconnected the call.

Foolish, reckless man. Fool. Stupid man. "Hannibal! Hannibal!" he kept repeating his name, the name on his lips gave him some kind of comfort. Who is the bigger fool here, Will considered it for a moment. How could he not have anticipated this, Abigail Oh my God…

The sound of sharp breaths, Will turns around. The ghost of a man … he looks so different… mussed hair, wild eyes, creased shirt, blood on his collars and blood on his face… the man Will had come to consider running away with… Is that a drop of tear?

“I laid my soul bare for you to feast, but you didn’t want it” said the man, his voice trembling.

“Didn’t I?” is all Will could say, he felt a sharp pain he doesn’t know the source of the pain though, it’s radiating from the core of his body.

He locked the door and got into the car. He closed his eyes, there is only one direction that he could go now, there is only one thing to be done. He thanked Hannibal for making the decision for him. He opened his eyes and drove.

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

> Will navigates through Freddie, Zeller, Alana, Jack and wades across pools of emotions. He starts building an web of truths and lies, all over again. Finally we get to the scene where he meets Hannibal for the first time in the story, Hannibal now behind bars.

It was drizzling. Will left his car and looked up, light rain soaked his face. Water mixed with his tears and salty streaks ran down to the sides of his lips. Will realized he is finally unable to hold back. The rain gives permission, he can shed a few drops without care, he thanked silently.

The first person he had to face after getting down from the car was Freddie, it had to be her. Will grimaced at her sight, red curls bouncing like Medusa's mane.

"Congratulations, the man of the moment, is it? I have been waiting for hours for a byte from you… it's a shame you were not at the scene agent Graham."

Patronizing, prick... he thought.

"I am in a hurry Freddie." Will tried to get past her.

"Oh darling I died for you, but looks like you are mourning s-o-m-e-o-n-e e-l-s-e." She caught his hand, dragged out the last two words in a sing song. Then she winked.

Will jerked his hands free from her hold, swallowed his anger. "Freddie seriously, I am thankful, the Bureau is thankful for your services. And you should be thankful too for getting a chance to be the real insider. You are now the hero of your own story, go celebrate."

"I can read you Will Graham, just as you can read me. They got the girl in one piece. Looks like you will need me a lot in future, more than what you care to admit." She smiled almost measuring him up and down. "I can help you, and you know what Tattle crime would demand in return."

Will swallowed. He considered it. She is intelligent, there is no doubt about it. "I will consider a fair bargain" he chewed his words without making an eye contact.
"Well then." she extended her hands.

He settled for the world's feeblest handshake.

It was late, turnstiles at the office would not work at this hour, Zeller came down to check him in and escort him to Jack's room.

“You are working on the … the… e-evidence?” Will asked.

Zeller threw a strange look at his direction “Alana told you?” Will tried to analyze the look in his own face, is he looking too unhappy, too in-convincing?

Alana should not have called ideally; he knows… “I got the news one way or other, why else would I be here at this hour” Will chuckled trying to sound normal, trying to sound... how should people expect him to react? satisfied? Pleasantly surprised? He put up a smile.

Alana was waiting, as expected. Her hair was messy, eyes and tip of nose were red; she must have been crying pretty badly. “Take care both of you” Zeller left.

Alana hugged him as soon as Zeller left. Will hesitated for a fraction of a second then put an arm around her lightly. He felt appalled at his own lack of emotions, he had once begged her to be close and now he felt repelled as if she were antimatter.

“Alana… I…”

“I know Will” she freed herself from the loose embrace and looked up “You don’t have to say anything, we have all been poisoned and pulled down to the abyss, none of us knows how to feel, anymore.”

Will felt relieved as she provided a readymade justification for his indifference, he was searching for one hopelessly.

“Have you spoken to Jack?”

“Just the news, that’s all” she was still sniffling.

Will tried to assess the situation as swiftly as possible. In last few months he got a hang of how things work. The case must have been escalated, Jack’s bosses got involved. Why was he sidelined? Is it the mutilation? Or because he said there is no evidence? Because they were impatient? Is it Mason? Margot? No not Margot. Mason... Fuck! Could be. Hannibal’s psychiatrist... the woman what’s her name Bedelia Du Maurier. It could be all of them. A low ranked unstable agent doesn’t stand a chance.
“Jack was right about Abigail; she must have been dragged to murder by Hobbs, and then God knows what lessons Hannibal might have given her” Alana is constantly sniffling. “The first time in my life Will I am wrong about every single thing” she now breaks down sobbing, covering her face with her palms.
Will looked at her passively. He felt no urge to comfort her.

“We all are wrong about everything Alana” he blurted out, honest statement indeed.

He felt hollow, his insides have been carved out, why does he feel like this? Has there been any promise? Did he swear an oath, did Hannibal? What can be considered a promise… when he declared they were both alone without each other ? or by the fireplace when Hannibal looked radiant, he talked about Achilles “Only a divine intervention could bring them down.” Oh fuck him. Fuck everything. He could have told him about Abigail once. Then realization hit him like a ton of bricks, his jaws tightened, Hannibal was testing him. Of

course only he would do that. Son of a bitch. Anger lasted for a moment then the lump in the throat returned. Why blame Hannibal? He could have confessed too, but he kept lying. Will Graham, you deserve this. Will closed his eyes sucked back any tears that could form. "Where else would I go" He remembered the weight of his hands on him, warm and affectionate, molten wax, he felt a knot in his stomach, there it was yes they did swear some reckless oaths. Stupid promises. And it is now left to him alone to wade through the unknown waters, he doesn't even know where Hannibal stands how he feels now. He has to find out. He has to find an excuse to meet the man. He has to lay his eyes on him again.

Jack entered interrupting his thoughts.

Jack never looked more tired, he never looked more satisfied either.

"Will? Alana? I got late with all the paperwork, a long day" Jack chucked "Longest day ever, go home Alana it is very late now. I know you both are here for Abigail. She is fine but she won't talk. At least not to us. We are looking at someone specialized at doing this. She is completely mute right now."

Will latched on to Jack's assumptions "How is she, I need to meet her." He is well aware it is not possible so easily, but it gives him an opportunity to start a meaningful conversation.

"I don't think any of us should meet her right away." Jack paused. "She was treated well, monsters are strange creatures, he probably even loved the girl in his own way, who knows he might have tried to be her father." Jack adjusted his chair so that he could face them both. "He was planning to leave, we got documents, tickets. Three persons at least. Who could be the third?"

Will froze.

Jack was having some conversation with Alana which he was not listening to anymore, everything in the room was a blur now, past, present and future fusing into nothing. He was now in Hannibal's kitchen, Hannibal served the meat that they cooked together, one bite and he has figured it was not Freddie, it was all a lie. He looked sad, like a shadow of the brilliant man he used to be.. "I let you know me, see me but it is only your reckoning that mattered all along, isn't it?"

"I have to see Hannibal"

Whatever conversation Jack was having with Alana stopped.

"Will?" Jack's tone is like a mild rebuke.

"I have to see him Jack. Moving so fast was a mistake trust me" Will tore eye contact and looked straight at the abstract pattern of the carpet, searching desperately for a design and he finally came up with one.

"Jack, he has more prisoners held at different places beyond our perception. Abigail, Miriam Lass are only the tip of the iceberg. This is what I was trying to get from him but … all this happened. I am good fisher of man Jack I will prove it."

It was a gamble, but it worked.

Eight weeks passed in producing official orders and necessary permissions. Will was finally at the gates of the prison that caged his monster. Alana also got what she wished for. To be the jailer of her tormentor. She guarded the cage and the keys fiercely. “Do not let him enter your head Will.”

“I won’t” he lied, smiled and walked through the doors, walked through the passage leading to the cell. It was in the same block where he was imprisoned several weeks ago. But the cell was remodeled to have no neighbors, bars replaced by glass, a larger chamber.

There he was. Standing tall, facing away from him. His hair cut short, hospital overalls. Still a luminous creature as always.

Will had not decided how to address him, past few weeks his thoughts were occupied by only this man and he called him in the way he had been calling him in his dreams. By his first name.

“Hello Hannibal.”

The moment he had been waiting for.

Hannibal now turned around to face him.

Will thought he would not be able to look him in the eye, but standing here in-front of him he is mesmerized.

“Hello. I see you look victorious now Mr. Graham? how does it make you feel? ”

Maliciously polite, it struck Will harder than any knife ever could. They are no longer on first name basis. It would have been better if Hannibal lashed out, if he was angry, but Hannibal looked as calm as summer sea. He had to make some waves in the quiet water, Will steeled himself with determination. His eyes are getting wet now. Alana is following this conversation. FBI is following this conversation. He should be surefooted.

"One can only see what one observes, and one observes only things which are already in the mind.” says Will.

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

> Short chapter. Hannibal and Will talk finally. Under obvious surveillance. Does Will get any closure

“I see you look victorious now Mr. Graham? how does it make you feel?”

How does it make him feel? What answer could he give standing here under the white hard lights and meticulous surveillance cameras and microphones.

But what does Hannibal see, that is a pertinent question, is the cerebral psychopath exerting his mind enough to actually “see” Will?

He gives him a hint.

"One can only see what one observes, and one observes only things which are already in the mind.” Says Will.

Hannibal is quiet for a second, letting it sink in “My mind now is the property of the government I assume, and the bureau and psychiatric societies. What is in your mind Mr. Graham?” he answers with the same unreadable expression and politely malicious tone he has been maintaining since he uttered his first words.

Will’s mind is brimming with things he wants to say, share but he restricts himself to - “Secrets. The kind of secrets the nature of which you don’t fully understand but sworn to keep. My mind is crawling with scorpions of secrets of that kind Hannibal… how about you?”

“I do not have any secrets Agent Graham, at least I did not keep any secrets from you. But you wore your vengeance like an armor, your secrets never escaped your armor… is that how you caught me?”

“I did not catch you Hannibal, as you are well aware, I wasn’t even present.”

“Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Is it?”

Irrefutable.

Will couldn’t fight the logic, not in this room. Why is Hannibal making it so difficult, what armor is he wearing now? He looks and looks at him, Hannibal is not making any light remark to break the ice, nothing regarding his personal life, can he smell his aftershave? Will

changed it just to get them talking. He had spent several hours picking the new expensive cologne and aftershave, but Hannibal made no attempt to approach him.

“Absence can mean a lot of other things Hannibal. But I believe we have not reached a point where we can prove or disprove anything.”

“What point did you reach then? I had reached my point agent Graham the moment I smelled Ms. Lounds on you in my office.”

This gives Will a lot to ponder on. He smelled Freddie? When? Oh… when he met her the day before this…everything… happened. That is why he asked him to leave with him after serving the lamb. He had given a chance to confess. Will did not. Will wanted to prove much more. To himself, to Jack, to Hannibal. He wanted and waited for the dinner, where he thought his vicious urges, his dark instinctive knowledges would crawl out from the burrows and take over the show, helping him decide.

He tried something else. “I am to meet Abigail after our meeting is over.”

“Of course you will. She must be attending a correction facility to wipe out her uniqueness and purge her soul for an elusive cure.” Hannibal scoffed. “I think even you are headed for an antidote of that kind, that won’t work though, it is incurable. But you are too busy in self-congratulation to be able to distinguish a gift from a curse. Yes, I was molding her in our likeness for our child to grow…” Hannibal stopped.

A chink in the armor.

Did he say “our child”? he thought, almost hopeful.

He almost chokes up while pushing the words from his mouth “Talking about cure, there is comfort in denial but the blindness brought about by denial is not curable either.”

“Are you accusing me of something?” Hannibal is curt.

“Does the creature hiding behind the shell not agree with the accusation?”

“You can accuse me of being blind, I was truly blinded, congratulations should be in order for you. Goodbye Mr. Graham." Hannibal turned away and walked to the other side of the room, his hands behind his back he has suddenly busied himself in examining the only framed painting hung in the wall of his cell. Will looked around quietly, Alana took care that he has a few books, some papers, pencils and one painting.

So that is what he can have for today he dragged his feet along the corridor to Alana’s office. It will be another long day, he has to meet Abigail and Jack wants him to meet at the Bureau for something Will has not been briefed about.

Hannibal has successfully lodged the worst kind of bullet inside his heart. “I was truly blinded”… Will Graham you deserve this.

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Hannibal's POV as he thinks of Will, he is on the verge of a decision. But will he act on that ? Jack Crawford weighs in his options as well, he is in discussion with Bedelia.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The ninth circle of hell-- “The treacheries of these souls were denials of love and of all human warmth. Only the remorseless dead center of the ice will serve to express their natures. As they denied God's love, so are they furthest removed from the light and warmth of His Sun. As they denied all human ties, so are they bound only by the unyielding ice”

Hell is not only fire, it can be ice as well, the ninth circle of hell is for traitors who are frozen in lakes of ice. But Will is still awaiting his trial. And it is Hannibal who is drowned in pitch black icy cold. Turning away from the man behind the glass wall, Hannibal walked back as far away from him as possible within the confines of the cell. Waiting for Will to leave. But even at a distance, in spite of the glass between them he could smell his nervousness, his blood and sweat, new cologne, a new shirt, and dogs and grass and wet earth. He closed his eyes and could easily imagine everything Will has done this morning – gone to the stream, put on new clothes, petted his dogs and met Alana before coming to him. His crafty words which would have otherwise made him proud infuriated him today to madness.

Why does one dream of the impossible? Why does one dream of the ideal? If there were any creator who holds the key to our minds and desires, he is a sadist. Hannibal had always relied on his own systems, beliefs, justice and they have never failed him. Never before had he dreamt of impossible things or chased them in vain, never before had he indulged in the idea of the ideal. Hannibal did not know which feeling he should be giving priority to – of finding a way out of his confines to get back to beloved freedom or the embarrassment of what he had been reduced to, avenge, destroy the man who he thought was an equal and claim his superiority?

But Hannibal was surprised – Alas, another voice still dwells inside his soul which doesn’t agree. “After everything you still want to go with him?”

“Where else would I go?”

Hannibal sighed.

There is no way he can let that voice guide him. “Everything was a lie… “he hissed. It would have been bearable if those moments never happened, those moments of absolute joy, of sharing meals, of Will in the sacred abode of his kitchen, Will learning the art of mastering

his instincts, Will sharing his pain of loneliness… “Ahhh it hurts” Those moments of absolute joy for Hannibal were instants of absolute deception by Will Graham… agent Graham. May be he was wearing a wire all along, may be every day he went back to the bureau to share how Hannibal Lecter is being made a fool, how gullible the crazy psychopath is. May be he gloated, maybe he is still gloating.

It is too late.

Will had already failed his test, he knew the day he smelled Freddie on him. Then why this pain? Because he had still waited, he asked him after dinner that day. He waited the entire night for Will to reconsider his decision, he had waited when FBI was knocking down his doors. Abigail was scared, she wanted them to leave. “We cannot leave without Will.” He had calmed her down. How easy was it for him to leave after he realized Will was lying? “Not easy” … Because Will had become his worship, his muse, his family, his goal and his home. Or that is what he thought he was. Will was not worth his worship or his time. Hannibal deserved better, Abigail deserves better.

Hannibal Lecter has never felt confused ever in his entire life, he was never at crossroads, decisions were easy. He had never felt love, not after Mischa. His freedom is his ultimate love. And there was absolute freedom in the absence of love. Still he had loved Will obsessively and unreasonably, ‘two dark souls melding’ he had thought ... and Will? What a cunning boy he is to have waited and schemed and seduced with his crafty words, mirroring him all along to steal his freedom and his life from him. This is unbearable, he thought. He can’t live with him, he can’t live without him, he can’t have him but he can’t let him be. He should make him his forever just the way he immortalized Mischa.

“I must eat him.”

Jack Crawford was enjoying a quiet moment in a very long time. It’s an irony that the ‘quiet moment’ is actually being spent at yet another psychiatrist’s chamber… Dr. Bedelia Du Maurier. She is yet to come.

There is not much to celebrate… he reflected. Yes, the monster is caged.

But Bella has another month may be. The love of his life.

Miriam has not recovered.

He lost Beverly to carelessness.

Frederick was shot and he is responsible for it.

And Will?

Will needs help, but till now Jack has not been able to provide him anything meaningful. All he has done is pushing him to the devil, when the devil was devouring him and Will called out for help, Jack had forsaken him. The guilt is gnawing at his soul. And now, when the devil has been given his due Jack feels that somewhere he is losing Will. Monsters have their own way of dealing with adversaries, has the monster cast a spell on him? Jack has spoken to a few people he doesn't know if he should have spoken to. Clark Ingram. Mason Verger. Unreliable. But Jack wants to find out. He has to help Will.
And now he is at her chamber.

A knock on the door. Bedelia stepped in "We meet again then" … "Fate and circumstances...but an opportunity for both of us" Jack extends his hand. A firm shake.

"An opportunity for you but I am not sure about mine though."

"The Federal Bureau would like to have long term ties with you Dr. Du Maurier."

"What makes you think I am very eager to be on board?" … she pours a glass of wine for herself and gestures at Jack if he would have one. Rose wine.

"No Thanks" Bella loved Rose wines.

"From our brief call last week, I presume we are here not for Hannibal Lecter but for Will Graham… Am I right?"

Jack nodded "I am afraid yes... the best resource I have. The best resource the bureau can ever have." He paused. "I am not sure if I can put a finger on it, I can only feel that he needs help… please doctor… the last time I approached someone on this matter was Hannibal. So you can assume my mental state."

"I surely can" she breathed out, spreading out her words. She raised the glass to her lips and stopped. "How do we start? In my professional opinion we have to start with Hannibal first and eventually arrive at Will Graham."

"As you wish doctor, and as I had requested, I wanted you have a discussion with him at the bureau, in my office… in my presence of course."

"Yes I would be very interested to meet him… though I must say have heard a lot about him, my sessions with Hannibal were only about him towards the end. That is one of the reasons I withdrew. I sensed danger, but I respected our doctor patient confidentiality clause, I was a professional. I wish I could tell you at that point."

"You helped us enough doctor."

"Hannibal is what in my experience is a social antisocial. Every person is constantly being molded by their environment. In Hannibal's case his environment had absolutely no influence on him until he met Will Graham. He had seen something in Graham…" she paused…" Let me rephrase it… he thought he saw something in Graham that would be an opportunity."

“But doctor, this is not the first time he has seen an opportunity, we are pouring over the files… he experimented with several patients the most notable being Randall Tier.”

“He never discussed any of those patients with me so unfortunately we do not have a point of reference about his earlier or other interests. He confessed being obsessively intrigued with Will Graham, he said he sees the prospect of a friendship. He was elated when Will resumed his therapy, this is when I severed my tied with him... ended the doctor patient relationship.” … she sipped some wine and continued “Hannibal is not a psychopath by definition, he has the ability to regret, he has the ability to empathize if he wants to… or even have real feelings. As the behavioral head you must be aware that psychopaths can only mimic real human feelings. Hannibal does a lot more than mimicking. “

“And Will?”

“Yes, that brings us to the topic of Will Graham which is more difficult.” She reached out for a piece of paper and drew a rough diagram of two overlapping circles. “His psychic ability is beyond any clinical understanding or references in medical literature. She points to the circles then – “The circle over the right is the psychic ability... the one to the left is his peculiar case of overactive empathy and here they overlap.” She shades the portion then draws another smaller circle that overlaps with the other two…” And this is the unknown area which has imprints from his psychic ability and empathy and may even have something of his own.”

“What of his own?”

“We don’t know that. At least not from how much information I have.”

“Will Graham has the ability to show that side of him which you want to see… He convinced Hannibal he was seeing someone as unique as himself.“

“And trying to do that he made deals with the devil?”

“Possible, we don’t know the nature of those deals… Is he still on the case?”

“Yes, he is. He is the only one who has pointed us to the right direction. He is supposed to meet Hannibal today for further enquiry. He believes Hannibal held more prisoners apart from Abigail and Miriam.”

“I do not think he should be involved in the case right now. Not anymore. That would be my professional opinion. Do you have any knowledge about their private discussions?”

“Nothing substantial” Jack swallowed. Half-truth. He had some knowledge from a few extremely unreliable resources, Clark Ingram, now free on a bail, Mason Verger who hardly recalls anything and one of Mason’s staff.

“Let us meet him then. Let us meet Will Graham.” Bedelia said while gulping down the last bit of wine.

Chapter End Notes

The chapter starts with a quick reference to Dante's inferno. The ninth circle of hell is reserved for those who have engaged in betrayal. The discussion between Jack and Bedelia is borrowed heavily from one of the season 2 deleted scenes, with added personal interpretations. I have included some of my interpretation about Will Graham's psychology as well.

I am bringing up Clark Ingram, he seemed to be the only one to actually have witnessed an interaction between smitten Lecter and Will. What if Peter's Social Worker is back ! We will see more of him in later chapters.

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